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SOURCE Dziennik Zachodni.

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS PLAGUE
HEAVILY POPULATED KATOWICE WOJEWODZTWO

One third of all the people employed in Polish industry live in Katowice Wojewodztwo. An area constituting 2 percent of the total area of Poland contains 10 percent of the country's total population. The density of population in this region averages 300 persons per square kilometer, and increases in the coal belt itself. These facts illustrate the gravity of the transportation problem and the difficulties which face the WPK (Wojewodztwo Przedsiębiorstwo Komunikacyjne, Wojewodztwo Transportation Enterprise), the PKP (Polskie Koleje Państwowe, Polish State Railroads) and the PKS (Państwowa Komunikacja Samochodowa, State Motor Transportation).

Increase in Passengers

Many new people have already come and will continue to come to Slask as a result of the construction of new factories and the expansion of existing plants. The number of people using streetcar and bus services to get to work, and the number of students using them to get to school is constantly increasing.

In 1950, 200,729,000 people used the trolleys, and by 1951 the number increased to 214,773,000. The number of bus passengers rose from 25,348,000 in 1940 to 36,500,000 in 1951.

Technical Obstacles

The postwar transportation situation in Katowice Wojewodztwo was characterized by obsolete rolling stock, lack of electrical substations, ancient bus depots, a few repair shops, and a few broken down busses remaining from the occupation.

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The situation has undergone a tremendous improvement, and today there is modern tramway rolling stock. The length of tramway lines increased by 14.37 percent during 1951. There are 10.7 percent more tramway motor cars and trailers. The number of busses increased by 34.72 percent in 1951.

The Bedzin-Grodziec, Sosnowiec-Milowice, Rokitnica Mikulczyce, and other new routes were put in service in 1951. Unnecessary tramway lines in localities possessing adequate railroad transportation, or served by the PKS, have been liquidated.

Despite the progressive development of the transportation network and rolling stock it is not keeping pace with the ever-increasing demands for service. The present system of working out plans for the use of technical equipment makes it impossible to put a greater amount of rolling stock in service. It is urgent that substantial transportation investments be planned even though they may not be realized immediately. Some improvements at a few tramway junction points can be anticipated next year.

Rolling Stock Shortage

Bus shortages are another matter. At one time the number of busses in the wojewodztwo was sufficient. However, a portion of these was reassigned to other Polish cities. This was done so that eventually a given area would have the same bus model. Some new busses of foreign make were imported into Slask but they were not suited for the difficult operating conditions in Katowice Wojewodztwo. Repair difficulties, lack of parts, and the weakness of the bus bodies (often subject to cracking) forced the withdrawal of these busses from use and increased waiting periods between busses. Naturally, this increased the difficulties in bus transportation. The mistake was a managerial one. The busses were put in service without creating conditions necessary for their rational use.

Since the difficulties in solving the transportation problem are of a technical nature, better work organization would result in greater mobility of means of transportation. The WRN (Wojewodska Rada Narodowa, Wojewodztwo National Council) in Katowice enacted an excellent decree in an effort to stagger traffic during rush hours. It tried to introduce a system of staggered working hours in different institutions, plants, and schools. Unfortunately the schools did not follow this decision. Moreover, personnel meetings in various enterprises decided to return to the old schedule. A wise and carefully worked out plan was thus invalidated almost at once.

Personnel Turnover

The turnover of WPK personnel contributed indirectly to the transportation difficulties. This is especially true in the case of women employed as motormen or conductors. The fact that these women so often resign from their jobs is due to the improper behavior of the public, the inexcusable and easy-going conduct of our youth, and the lack of proper supervision.

All these problems aggravate the transportation difficulties of Katowice Wojewodztwo. Elimination of these deficiencies, especially the last one, would facilitate improvement of conditions in transportation until the time when planned investments can completely solve the problem.

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